His Majesties
MOST GRACIOUS
SPEECH,
Together with the
Lord Chancellors,
To both Houses of
PARLIAMENT,
On *Munday* the 21th of *October*, 1678.

By His MAJESTIES *special Command.*

EDINBURGH,

Re-Printed by the Heir of *Andrew Anderson*, Printer to His most Sacred *MAJESTY*. 1678.

His Majesties

MOST GRACIOUS

SPEECH,

Together with the

Lord Chancellors,

To both Houses of

PARLIAMENT,

On Munday the 11th of October, 1678.

By His MAJESTIES *special Command.*

EDINBURGH,

Re-Printed by the Heir of *Andrew Anderson*, Printer to His most Sacred MAJESTY 1678.

His Majesties

Most Gracious

SPEECH

My Lords and Gentlemen,

I Have thought the time very long since We parted last; and would not have deferred your meeting by so many Prorogations, if I could well have met you sooner.

The part which I have had this summer in the Preservation of Our Neighbours, and the well securing what was left of Flanders, *is sufficiently known, and acknowledged by all that are abroad; and though for this cause I have been obliged to keep up my Troops (without which Our Neighbours had absolutely despaired) yet both the Honour and Interest of the Nation have been so far improved by it, that I am confident no man here will Repine at it, or think the Money Raised for their Disbanding, to have been ill employed in their Continuance; and I do assure you I am so much more out of Purse for the Service, that I do expect you should supply it.*

How far it may be necessary (considering the present State of Christendom) to reduce the Land and Sea Forces, or to what degree, is worthy of all Our serious considerations.

I now intend to acquaint you (as I shall always do with any thing that concerns Me) that I have been informed of a Design against My Person, *by the* Jesuits, *of which I shall forbear any Opinion, lest I may seem to say too much or too little, but I will leave the* Matter *to the Law, and in the mean time will take as much Care as I can to prevent all manner of Practices by that sort of men, and of others too who have been tampering in a high degree with Foreigners, and contriving how to introduce Popery amongst us.*

I shall conclude with the Recommending to you my other Concerns.

I have been under great Disappointments by the Defects of the Poll-Bill.

My Revenue is under great Anticipations, and at the best, was never equal to the constant and necessary Expence of the Government, whereof I intend to have the whole State laid before you, and require you to look into it, and consider of it, with that Duty and Affection, which I am sure I shall alwayes find from you.

The rest I leave to the Chancellor.

THE Lord Chancellors SPEECH To both Houſes of PARLIAMENT.

My Lords, and you the Knights, Citizens, and Burgeſſes of the Houſe of Commons,

HOw much the King relies upon the Advice and Aſſiſtance of his Parliament, How Neceſſary He counts it to Him, and How ſafe He thinks Himſelf in it, is Evident by this, that He hath not ſuffered You all this Year to be out of His Reach, but hath continued You from Time to Time by a Succeſſion of little and ſhort Prorogations. And without all peradventure we had ſooner met, if it had been poſſible for us to take Right Meaſures here, without a full Knowledge of the State and Condition of our Neighbours.

The Cloſe and Period of the Laſt Seſſion is very Memorable, for it may ſeem perhaps to ſome to have ended with very Different, if not contrary Counſels and Supplies, tending both to War and Peace: But yet they who look more nearly into the matter, ſhall find, that this Incertainty proceeded not from any Unſteadineſs at Home, but from the Mutability of Affairs Abroad, Every Week almoſt producing ſeveral and contrary Appearances.

The ſame Incertainties of Counſels and Events abroad continu'd for the moſt part of the Summer. One while the Parties Exhauſted by the War ſeemed to be willing to accept any Peace their Enemies would give; and there wanted not thoſe among them who made uſe of the Impatience of their People to Neceſſitate them to it.

Another while the performance of the Conditions offer'd, became ſo Doubtful, and was at laſt Explain'd in a manner ſo Vaſtly Different from the firſt Propoſals, that Deſpair begot new Reſolutions of Continuing the War.

In the midſt of theſe miſerable Perplexities and Confuſions, His Majeſty was Daily ſollicited with the Higheſt Importunities, and the moſt Earneſt Supplications that were poſſible, not to Diſband the Troops he had raiſed; And not only ſo, but that He would ſtill continue to ſend over more and more of his Troops, and to Augment the Forces which he had already Abroad.

They

They did as good as tell Him plainly, That it was from the Reputation of his Alliance that any Overtures of Peace had been made at all, and that it was from the Continuance of His Arms that any fair performance could be expected.

They pray'd His Majesty to consider, That if He thought it Expedient to Obtain some Kind of Respit or Breathing-time for the *Spanish Netherlands*, or to secure any kind of Frontier or Barrier, between them and their too Powerful Neighbours; All this and more, very much more, perhaps no less then the safety of Christendom, would Entirely depend upon His Majesties preserving Himself in that Considerable Posture both by Sea and Land, wherein He then was.

There was no Resisting such Repeated Intercessions; and though His Majesty saw well enough that his Complying with these Desires would engage Him in an Expence far beyond what He was then Provided for, yet He could not possibly Decline the Charge, nor refuse to undergo the Difficulties, And now, whatever the Cost of all this may amount to, Yet neither His Majesty nor His People will have any Cause to repent it, when they shall consider that it hath already produced such great and good Effects to His Majesties Allies, and so much Honour to the whole Nation, that whatsoever is sav'd of *Flanders*, is now acknowledged by all the World, to be wholly due to His Majesties Interposition.

And though the Peace which since hath followed, be very far from such a Peace as His Majesty could have wish't; Yet 'tis such a Peace as His Neighbours were Resolv'd to have; No Obligations they lay under to insist upon a better Peace, No Conjunction with His Majesty, No nor the Offers to Declare War on their behalfs, if they desired it, could prevail with them, or keep them from being wrought upon by the ill Arts of those who first raised unreasonable Jealousies amongst them, and then caus'd them to precipitate themselves into a Peace.

Thus you see at once, not only the Necessity which His Majesty had to Continue His Troops in Pay, but likewise the Benefits and Advantages which have come of it.

Let no man wonder then, if the Money given toward this Disbanding have been applied toward the Payment of the Army as far as it would go. There needs no Excuse for that which was inevitable.

The Provision which was made for Paying off the Army, went no further than till the last of *June* for Part, and the last of *August* for the Rest; But the Fleet was provided for only till the Fifth of *June*, so that the Continuation of the Fleet and Army from that Time was wholly upon His Majesties Charge.

And as this was an Expence so absolutely Necessary to our own Interest, in the Preservation of our Neighbours, that His Majesty could not with any Honour or Safety to Himself have avoided it: So the Service which hath been done by this means to a great part of Christendom, is so universally acknowledged, that you cannot but be well pleased to have your share in the Honour of it, and be

willing to Defray the rest of the Charge, which hath far exceeded all that was given by that Act.

And His Majesty hath found Himself in greater Straits then He could have imagined, by the unexpected Deficiency of the *Poll-Bill*: For whereas it was made a *Fonds* of Credit for Three hundred thousand Pound, besides a further Credit for Stores, The Product of that Act hath fallen so strangely short of what the Parliament expected from it, that it hath not raised that Sum of Money by a great deal, which was allowed to be borrowed upon it; And by this Means they who have furnisht Stores upon the Credit of that Act, will be in danger to be very great Losers, unless you are pleased to take some Care of them.

Thus you have shortly an Account of what hath been doing Abroad, and the Charge of it; 'Tis now high time to look a little nearer Home; And surely in that State of Things to which they are now reduced, 'tis Visible and plain enough what must be our Business for the time to Come.

First, We must look to our selves, and provide for our own safety; For that which the Confederates acknowledge with Thanks, We may be sure hath a quite different Resentment in other Places. And in order to this, Care must be taken so to strengthen Our selves both at Home and Abroad, that they who see us in a Firm and settled Estate, may have no hopes to Surprize, nor any Temptation to make an Attempt upon us. And herein it will be necessary to take notice of what His Majesty hath recommended to you, and to Weigh very well the Importance of Reducing the Sea and Land Forces, and the Consequences which may attend such a Reducement: For this be assur'd, that nothing in the World would more gratifie our Enemies, then to see us afraid of maintaining our selves in a Posture of Defence, which is the onely Posture they are afraid to find us in.

And that the Fears of Popery may not too much disquiet you, Be pleased to Consider that you have one Security more, Since that which was always the Interest of His Majesties Honour and Conscience, is now become the Interest of His Person too, to Protect the Protestant Religion, and to Prevent the Swarming of Seminary Priests. For His Majesty hath told You, that He hath lately received Information of Designs against His own Life by the *Jesuits*; And though he doth in no sort Prejudge the persons accus'd, yet the strict Enquiry into this matter hith been a means to discover so many other unwarrantable Practices of theirs, that His Majesty hath reason to look to them.

Nor are these kind of men the onely Factors for *Rome*; but there are found among the Laity also some who have made themselves Agitators to promote the Interests of a Forreign Religion, who meddle with Matters of State and Parliament, and carry on their Pernicious Designs by a most dangerous Correspondency with Forreign Nations.

What kind of Process the Proof will bear, and to how high a Degree

Degree the Extent and Nature of these Crimes will rise, is under Consideration, and will be fully left to the Course of Law.

In the next place, Let us carefully avoid all Differences amongst Our selves, all manner of Clashing about Jurisdictions, and all Disputes of such a Nature as can never end in any Accommodation. For this is still what Our Enemies would wish, who would be glad to see Us Ruin'd, without their being at the Charge of it.

And therefore We must now above all other Times Labour to shew the World the most effectual Significations of Our Loyalty and Duty, that We are able to express: For nothing in the World can more discourage Our Enemies, as on the contrary nothing does or can so Ripen a Nation for Destruction, as to be observ'd to Distrust their Own Government. Be pleas'd then now to take occasion to manifest such a Zeal for the Government, as to look into the State of that Revenue which should support the Constant and Necessary Charge of it, and to see that it be made equal to it.

There are many Motives to obliege Us to this Inspection; First you see the King Expects it, And then again you cannot but see, that Nothing is or can be of a more Publick Consideration, then to support the Dignity of the Crown, which is in Truth the Dignity of the Nation: Besides, 'tis Unsafe as well as Dishonourable, that the Kings Revenue should fall short of His most necessary and most unavoidable Expences.

And if upon a due Examination it shall be made appear to you, that though there had been no Diminutions of the Customs, yet no Thrift or Oeconomy in the World could ever make the Revenue able to answer the certain Charge of the Government, much less to discharge those Anticipations which lie heavy upon it; How can it be possible for it to supply those Contingencies which happen even in Times of Peace, and which can never be brought under any Regulation or Establishment.

You may be sure, a Great and Generous Prince would be glad, by good Managery, to have wherewithall to Exercise His Royal Bounty. But our Neighbours have found a way to prevent all that: For their Vast Preparations put His Majesty upon a Vast Expence, to preserve Himself and us.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

You now find the King involv'd in Difficulties as great, and, without your Assistance, as insuperable, as ever any Government did labour under.

And yet His Majesty doth not think that there need many words to bespeak your Zeal and Industry in His Service: For the things themselves now speak, and speak aloud. The Publick and the Private Interest do both perswade the same Things, and are, and ought to be mighty in perswasion.

If the Honour and Safety of your Countrey; and, which is next to that, the Concerns of your own Families and Posterities, cannot

awaken your utmoſt Care to preſerve that Government which onely can preſerve you and yours, all other Diſcourſes will be to no purpoſe.

There can be no Difficulties at all to them who take Delight in Serving of the King and their Countrey, and love the Occaſions of ſhewing it.

Such are All Here. But though the King have had for many Years a large and full Experience of your Duty, yet there never was a Time like this to trie your Affections.

There is ſo ſtrange a concurrence of ill Accidents at this time, that 'tis not to be wondred at, if ſome very honeſt and good men begin to have troubled and thoughtful Hearts. Yet that which is infinitely to be lamented, is, That malicious men too begin to work upon this occaſion, and are in no ſmall hopes to raiſe a Storm that nothing ſhall be able to Allay.

If you can Reſcue the Kings Affairs from ſuch a Tempeſt as this; If you can Weather this Storm, and Steer the Veſſel into Harbour; If you can find a way to quiet the Apprehenſions of thoſe who mean well, without being carried away by the Paſſions of others, who mean ill; If you can prevent the Deſigns of thoſe Without-doors, who ſtudy nothing elſe but how to diſtract your Counſels, and to diſturb all your Proceedings: Then you will have perform'd as Great and as Seaſonable a piece of Service to the King, as ever yet he ſtood in need of.

And when the World ſhall ſee, that nothing hath been able to diſappoint the King of the Aſſiſtance He had reaſon to hope from this Seſſion, but that there is a Right underſtanding between the King and His Parliament, and that again ſtrengthened and increaſed by New Evidences of your Duty and Affection, and raiſed above all poſſibility of being interrupted:

Then ſhall the King be poſſeſſed of that true Glory which others vainly purſue, the Glory of Reigning in the Hearts of His People. Then ſhall the People be poſſeſs'd of as much Felicity as this World is capable of: And you ſhall have the perpetual Honour and Satisfaction of having been the means to procure ſo much ſolid and laſting Good to your Countrey, as the Eſtabliſhment of the Peace and Tranquillity of this Kingdom, and conſequently of all His Majeſties Dominions.

FINIS.